

Serial No. 09/756,997

Art Unit: 2822

Applicant changed "400" to --140-- in Claim 1 to correct a typographical error. Accordingly, Applicant believes that the rejection of claims 1-5 under 35 USC 112 are overcome, and that claims 1-5 are allowable.

35 USC 103

Applicant amended independent claims 6, 9 to limit the rinses to a rinse --consisting essentially of deionized water--.

To the extent that any art rejection continues to be applied against claims 6-11, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicant believes neither Murphy, Oikari, Bantu, nor any of the cited art teaches, discloses or suggests, either singly or in combination, a --rinse consisting essentially of deionized water--, let alone in combination with the remaining steps of Applicant's invention (claims 6, 9 as amended).

For example, Murphy teaches an ozonated DIW mist 120, and not a --rinse consisting essentially of deionized water-- as claimed by Applicant (claims 6,9 as amended).

Finally, none of the cited art teaches, discloses or suggests, either singly or in combination, Applicant's invention of claims 1-5.

Entry and allowance of claims 1-5, 6-11, as amended, are solicited.

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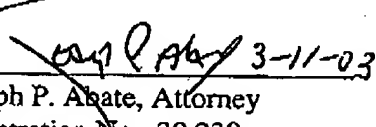
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Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. **This appendix is captioned "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made".**

Respectfully submitted,  
CAROLINE BOULENGER

By:

 3-11-03  
Joseph P. Abate, Attorney  
Registration No. 30,238  
Tel. (845) 894-4633

JPA/lbg

Attachment: Appendix - Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

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## VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

Kindly amend claims 1, 6 and 9 as follows:

1. (Twice Amended) A method for eliminating polymer blobs in a photoresist mask formed at the surface of a semiconductor wafer, comprising the steps of:

providing a semiconductor wafer having a photoresist layer formed thereon;

exposing, baking and developing the photoresist layer to produce a patterned photoresist mask; and

heating the wafer for a time sufficient to reach a temperature in a 100-[400]140°C range and without cooling it, and then rinsing the wafer with deionized water at a temperature equal to or higher than the room temperature.

6. (Twice Amended) A method for eliminating polymer blobs in a photoresist mask formed at the surface of a semiconductor wafer, comprising the steps of:

providing a semiconductor wafer having a photoresist layer formed thereon;

exposing, baking and developing the photoresist layer to produce a patterned photoresist mask, and then rinsing the wafer with a rinse consisting essentially of deionized water (DIW)

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having a temperature in a range of 40-60°C.

9. (Twice Amended) A method for eliminating polymer blobs in a photoresist mask formed at the surface of a semiconductor wafer, comprising the steps of:

providing a semiconductor wafer having a photoresist layer formed thereon;

exposing, baking and developing the photoresist layer to produce a patterned photoresist mask; and then

submitting the wafer to an extra rinse [with]consisting essentially of deionized water at a temperature in a 40-60°C range.

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